

Tofte Challenges Helms On CIA Search Policy

By the Associated Press

Hans V. Tofte said yesterday he demanded at a CIA inquiry a public statement by intelligence chief Richard Helms on whether the spy agency illegally searches American homes.

Tofte reported this after a brief confrontation yesterday with the Central Intelligence Agency panel checking charges that he violated security regulations.

The 55-year-old Danish-born veteran of cloak-and-dagger operations going back to World War II told reporters he was told as the meeting began that "it was a board of inquiry," so "I made one inquiry:

"Has the CIA now stopped entering people's homes illegally minus a warrant and without due process of law within the continental limits of the United States of America?"

He said he demanded that Helms "answer yes or no in person and in public."

"All of a sudden the meeting was over," he added. "I was escorted out—the whole meeting lasted 6 minutes."

There was no CIA comment on Tofte's versions of yesterday's events.

He contends that even CIA employees have a citizen's right against illegal search and seizure at home—and that CIA violated this in getting documents from his house July 24.

CIA's version is that Tofte's house was up for rent and a fellow CIA employee chanced on secret CIA documents there while he was genially apartment hunting. It is against CIA regulations to take classified material home. The CIA employee returned the following day with a security man and picked up the documents.

Tofte has been suspended with pay from his \$25,000-a-year position while CIA probes the case.